

LIBRARIAN FIGHTS FOR JOB LOST OVER CRITICISM OF JOURNALS CHOSEN

Oklahoma Oil Town in
Squabble About Con-
trol of Reading Matter
— Court Suit Filed in
Firing.

By F. A. BEHYMER

A Staff Correspondent of the
Post-Dispatch.

BARTLESVILLE, Okla. — Citi-
zens of this oil-blessed city, count-
ing their blessings one by one
but weighing against them the
value of their civil liberties, are



Miss Ruth
Brown

waiting for the
district court to
say whether the
City Commission
can control the
public library
and exclude
therefrom "sub-
versive" publi-
cations.
Denied a de-
cision by Judge
James T. Ship-
man, who dis-
qualified him-
self in deference to the divided
sentiments of the community
over the dismissal of the library
board and discharge of Miss Ruth
W. Brown, librarian, the defend-
ers of civil liberties are strength-
ening their position and prepar-
ing to carry on "the Battle of
Bartlesville" if the district court
decision is against them. The
question that, if necessary, they
will carry to the higher courts
is whether they shall have the
right to read, without restrictions,
such publications as the Nation
and the New Republic. Over the
question there is sharp dissension
between city officials and the
members of a "citizens' committee
on the one hand and a defense
committee of the friends of Miss
Brown who are asking the court
to reinstate her and the old li-
brary board members who sup-
ported her in her refusal to re-
move such publications from the
library shelves.

Ousters Hesitate to Talk.

City officials and members of
the "citizens' committee," al-
though they are presumed to
have at least the tacit support of
the powerful Phillips Petroleum
Corp. and the Cities Service Co.,
don't like to talk about the civil
liberties case. They are allergic
to publicity as something that
might hurt the town. There are
indications that the high com-
mand of the oil industry deplores
the fuss that has been made over
such a little issue as control of
the public library.

Members of the defense com-
mittee and others who have come
to the help of Miss Brown talk
freely about it, but on the other
side shush is the
word.

The City Com-
mission, whose
action has been
challenged in the
district court,
is composed of
Mayor E. S. Dun-
away, who is in
the abstract busi-
ness; Milo L.
Margenau, pub-
lic relations man
for the Cities



Mayor Dunaway

Service Co.; E. F. Kindsvater,
manager of the engineering de-
partment of the Cities Service
Co.; Joe Henton, who runs a fill-
ing station, and W. A. Forrest, a
grocer. At the time when they
passed an ordinance taking over
control of the library they did not
hold cards as patrons.

Mayor Dunaway is out of town.
He has, however, placed himself
on record in an oration that he
delivered at a meeting of the
City Commission on March 6, at
which friends of Miss Brown
were booed and heckled and
called Communists. The mayor
on that occasion dramatically
poured oil on the troubled waters.

"These are times," he said,
"that try men's souls and men's
minds as they have never before
been tried in the annals of our
history. The whole world is in
a state of confusion, engaged in

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